

The Clinical Effectiveness and Patient Satisfaction of Teleconsultation During the Period of COVID19 Pandemic in the ENT Department at KHUH

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ABSTRACT

HYPOTHESIS

To test for efficacy in teleconsultation in reducing patients crown in ENT clinic.

BACKGROUND/ INTRODUCTION

The pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) was first identified in Wuhan, Hubei, China, in December 2019. It was recognized by World Health Organization as a pandemic in March 2020¹. Coronavirus outbreak have affected the healthcare systems all around the world. It also challenged the well-developed healthcare systems. The volume of patients needing care was increasing with available resources. Different countries had different ways of trying to adopt and to create a plan in order to prevent its spread. On February 21, 2020 Bahrain confirmed its first COVID19 case. The ministry of health increased the epidemiological monitoring and prepared guidelines for health workers in how to deal with suspected cases².

A Cabinet meeting led by HRH the Crown Prince, met on a regular basis to address all the latest updates in order to contain the outbreak in Bahrain. At another end, King Hamad University Hospital (KHUH) have implemented several changes in order to protect their patients and the healthcare workers. Teleconsultation was recommended to certain specialties, which included Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT).

Teleconsultation is a general term for any consultation between doctors and patients on a network or a video link³.

The use of teleconsultation during the pandemic of COVID19 intends to minimize the patients visits to the hospital where they usually crowd in the waiting area in both the clinics and outpatient pharmacies. This will consequently reduce patient-to-patient, patient-to-doctor, and doctor-to-patient cross infections.

On the day of the scheduled appointment, the patient will receive a message (SMS) that the patient will be contacted by the physician. Accordingly, the physician will call the patient after reviewing the patient's history and records. First, the physician will introduce himself/herself, obtain a verbal consent and discuss the condition thoroughly. The outcome of the consultation shall be agreed between the patient and the doctor. The outcome can include medications refill, imaging, follow up after few months, or reassurance and discharge. However, some patient during the teleconsultation will require attendance on their schedule appointment.

Bahrain Med Bull 2021; 43 (3): 556 - 559

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